

## DRIVE ME UP THE WALL



This activity is basically reaching an arm up the wall. It's similar to the daily activity of retrieving items from overhead places. The extension can be felt the whole length of the body.

### **Benefits »**

- ⦿ Develops core stability during reaching-up activities.
- ⦿ Improves posture.
- ⦿ Strengthens back extensors.
- ⦿ Uses standing position to promote real-life balance while standing and reaching.

### **Set It Up »**

You will not need any special equipment for this exercise. But you do need a suitable wall or corner space for your participants to use.

### **How to Do It »**

#### **The Start**

Use the following cues.

- ⦿ Stand tall, facing the wall.
- ⦿ Place the feet in an offset position shoulder-width apart. The right foot is forward with the toe touching the wall.
- ⦿ Place both hands on the wall at shoulder height.
- ⦿ Lean toward the wall so that most of your body weight is over the front foot.
- ⦿ Brace the torso and inhale to prepare.



## The Moves

Essentially the move is one arm will be pushing up the wall, then pulling back and being lowered to the shoulder. It's like one arm drawing a big oval circle and trying to push out the top of the oval as far as they can.

- ⦿ Exhale and slide the left hand up the wall as far as comfortably possible.
- ⦿ Hold that spot a moment while you inhale.
- ⦿ Exhale and push that hand up a little farther. Allow the ribs to lift this time, but keep the abs braced.
- ⦿ Hold steady a moment again as you exhale and stay lengthened.
- ⦿ When you're ready, pull the arm off the wall; you'll shift some of your weight to the back foot.
- ⦿ Lower the arm to shoulder height and place it back on the wall.
- ⦿ Repeat six to eight times, as tolerated.
- ⦿ Change feet so the left foot is forward and right arm moves up the wall six to eight times, if tolerable.

## ***Take It Further »***

- ⦿ Increase repetitions.
- ⦿ Use a very light wrist weight on the reaching arm; .5 to 1 pound (.25-.5 kilogram) is enough.
- ⦿ Try Drive Me With a Twist:
  - Each time the arm is pulled off the wall, allow the torso, shoulders, and head to rotate to the same side as that arm, as shown in the photo.
  - Cue participants to pull the left arm off the wall and look left.
- ⦿ Reverse starting foot position, so that the forward foot is on the same side as the lifting arm.



## ***Give It More Balance »***

- ⦿ Stand on a plush carpet or firm balance pad with feet offset.
- ⦿ Roll a small Slo Mo-type ball up the wall.

## ***Keep It Safe »***

Reaching up and pulling an arm back can be a fall risk, so be careful. Using an offset foot position will reduce the risk. Keeping one hand on the wall also steadies their balance. Remind them to take their time and to feel steady before they pull their hands off the wall. Cue them to keep the torso as braced as possible while moving arms upward. Advise them to be careful when adding the *twist* option. They should stop if the activity feels unsafe or painful or makes them dizzy.